



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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FB10-085

## BP Oil Spill: NOAA Re-opens Federal Waters Southwest of the Mississippi River Delta to Commercial and Recreational Fishing

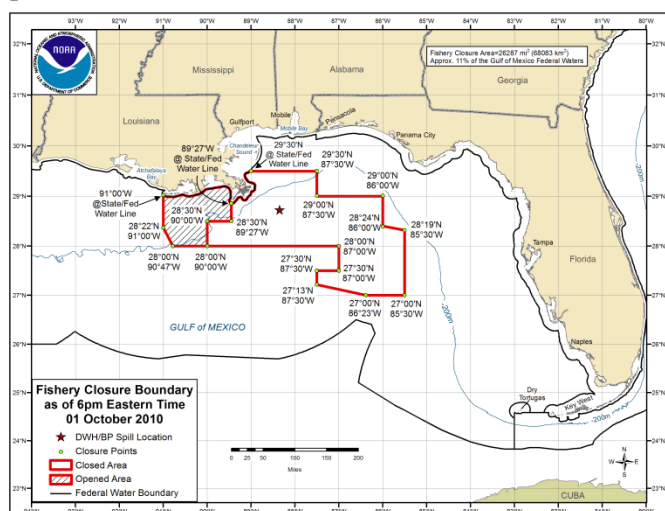
Effective **October 1, 2010 at 6 p.m. eastern time** (5 p.m. central time), NOAA will reopen 5,628 square miles (14,576 sq km) of area it had previously closed to commercial and recreational fishing in the Gulf of Mexico in response to the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

sampling of the area between August 15 and September 19 once the area was known to be completely oil free. Sensory analyses of 89 finfish and 25 shrimp samples and chemical analyses of 188 finfish in 15 composites and 75 shrimp in 15 composites collected after August 15 followed the methodology and procedures in the re-opening protocol. Sensory testing showed no detectable oil or dispersant odors or flavors in the samples, and the results of chemical analysis were well below levels of concern for oil.

NOAA continues to work closely with the FDA and the states to ensure seafood safety, by closing fishing areas where tainted seafood could potentially be caught, and assessing whether seafood is tainted or contaminated to levels that pose a risk to human health. NOAA and FDA are working together to sample seafood from inside and outside the closure area, as well as dockside- and market-based sampling.

The area closed to all fishing is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following coordinates:

North latitude	West longitude
29° 30'	At state/federal line
29° 30'	87° 30'
29° 00'	87° 30'
29° 00'	86° 00'
28° 24'	86° 00'
28° 19'	85° 30'
27° 00'	85° 30'
27° 00'	86° 23'
27° 13'	87° 30'
27° 30'	87° 30'
27° 30'	87° 00'
28° 00'	87° 00'
28° 00'	90° 00'
28° 30'	90° 00'
28° 30'	89° 27'
At the state/federal line	89° 27'
Follow the state/federal water line easterly to beginning point	



Map Link:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/deepwater\\_horizon/BP\\_Oil\\_Spill\\_FisheryClosureMap\\_100110.pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/deepwater_horizon/BP_Oil_Spill_FisheryClosureMap_100110.pdf)

The area closed to all fishing now measures 26,287 sq mi (68,083 sq km) and covers about 11% of the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone. All commercial and recreational fishing including catch and release is prohibited in this closed area. Transit through the closed area is allowed. The next federal re-opening priority is a 2,927-square mile area located off eastern Louisiana, just south of the Mississippi River delta.

The re-opened area was originally closed because oil was present in the area; however, no oil or sheen has been documented in the area since August 6. Trajectory models show the area is at a low risk for future exposure to oil. NOAA began sampling the area on July 27 but suspended sampling when oil was observed by scientists aboard the sampling vessel. NOAA conducted a second

## Reminders

Modeling and mapping the actual and projected spill area is not an exact science. NOAA Fisheries Service strongly advises fishermen not to fish in areas where oil or oil sheens (very thin layers of floating oil) are present, even if those areas are not currently closed to fishing.

If state waters are closed to fishing due to the oil spill, all vessels must comply with that closure. If state waters

are not closed to fishing due to the oil spill, federally permitted vessels may fish in those waters while abiding by all other applicable regulations.

Permit holders are reminded to maintain their federal vessel permits by submitting timely reporting requirements and renewal applications, even if the vessel is not currently engaged in fishing activities.

### Ways to Receive Closure Information:

- Sign up for Southeast Fishery Bulletins: send an email to: [SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov)
- Call 1-800-627-NOAA (1-800-627-6622) to hear a recording of the current coordinates (with messages in Spanish and Vietnamese)
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for updates
- Sign up for text messages on your cell phone: text **fishing@gulf** to 84469 (for more information, visit <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/558107>)
- Follow us on Twitter: usnoaagov to get a tweet when the closed area changes

### Links for more information:

#### Southeast Regional Office's Web page:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater\\_horizon\\_oil\\_spill.htm](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater_horizon_oil_spill.htm)

#### NOAA's National Ocean Service

<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov>

#### Deepwater Horizon Response

<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com>

Fishermen who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858.